How far the CLERGY AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH of *ENGLAND* OUGHT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE Non-Swearing Bishops.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

How far the Clergy, &c. ought to Communicate with the Non-Swearing Biſhops?

WHen the greateſt Part of the Clergy of the Dioceſe of *Norwich* had Sign'd and Sent up a Petition in the behalf of their Reverend Biſhop, which was by ſome of them Preſented, and ſeemed to have been Received with an Intention to Comply with it; and when it was thought the Example would have been made a Precedent to other Dioceſes, whoſe Biſhops at preſent lye under the Cenſure of a Suſpenſion, or Deprivation, or both; many good Men entertained Hopes, that, notwithſtanding the Severity of the late Act, much would have been done to reſtore ſuch Good, ſuch Holy, and Learned Biſhops to the due Exerciſe of that Authority which Chriſt (the great Biſhop of Souls, and Head of the Church) hath intruſted them with. But all theſe Hopes diſappear'd in a Moment; the Petition being put into ſuch Hands to anſwer it, that there were no Grounds left to believe, that it would be either Favourably Conſtrued, or Chriſtianly Comply'd with.

Since therefore that Method hath fail'd, I have thought fit to appeal to the Chriſtian World, to ſhew the Reaſonableneſs and Juſtice of the Procedure of thoſe Clergy-men, and to prove, that it is their

Duty (notwithſtanding the Determination of the Civil Power) to Pay that *Canonical Obedience* which they have Sworn to their Ordinary, and not to transfer it to any other, who ſhall be ſuper-introduced into that Church (till Death, or a Legal Deprivation, or a Voluntary Ceſſion make room) ſince it is expreſly againſt the Canons of the Antient Church, That two Biſhops, though both Orthodox, ſhould Exerciſe their Juriſdictions at the ſame time in one and the ſame See, as Ordinary Governors of the ſame in Matters Spiritual. This I may with Reaſon take for granted, ſince nothing can be more plain from Antiquity; inaſmuch as it was forbidden by the Venerable (*a*) *Council of Nice*; as it was alſo for the ſame Reaſon forbidden, That any Biſhop ſhould in his Life time Conſecrate his Succeſſor. And the Schiſm made at *Antioch* upon the Account of *Meletius* and *Paulinus*, both Ordained Biſhops of that See at once, is a convincing Inſtance how the Church Diſcipline was then exerciſed; for to ſet up two Biſhops at once in the ſame See opens a Gap to Schiſm, which was always look'd upon by the Antient Church (and the Sin is the ſame now, though not ſo much dreaded as it ought) to be a damnable Tranſgreſſion.

(*a*) Can. 8.

"To dye rather than to be guilty of making a "Schiſm in the Church of God is as Honourable a "Martyrdom, as to ſuffer rather than to offer Sa-"crifice to Idols, ſaid the Great (*b Dionyſius of Alexandria.* Nor can there be a greater Sin than to "break the Union of the Church, ſaid (*c*) St. *Cyprian*; "and whoever is guilty of that Tranſgreſſion, though "he dye a Martyr, yet his Blood ſhed for the Cauſe

(*b*) Ep. ad Novat. apud Euſeb. lib 6 c. 46
(*c*) De Unit. Eccl. & Ep. 73.

of

" of Chriſt cannot waſh away his Guilt. (For this thoſe Excellent Martyrs underſtood to be St. *Paul's* meaning, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *If I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing*; that is, A Man may dye a Martyr to One or All the Articles of the Chriſtian Creed, yet if he do not dye in the Unity of the Church, he loſeth his Crown; for thoſe Men can never preſerve Charity, who have violated Unity.) " This is a bold Saying, ſays " (*a*) St. *Chryſoſtom*, but it is a great and undeniable " Truth, to which he adds his own Sentiments, I " ſay and affirm, That to fall into wilfull Hereſie is " not a greater Crime than to make a Schiſm in the " Church: For what Profit hath a Man by his Or- " thodox Faith, (ſays *b*) St. *Auguſtine*) who gives " Charity a deadly Wound by his being a Schiſma- " tick, for this Sin is Sacrilege.

(*a*) To. 3. p. 822. Ed. Savil.

(*b*) De Bapt. cont. Donat. lib. 1. cap. 8.

Nor is this only the Senſe of the Venerable Sages of former Days, but of the Great Men of our own Church, among whom I ſhall only ſelect one, *viz.* (*c*) Biſhop *Hall*; " It is Felony by our Municipal " Laws for any Man to burn but the Frame of a " Building intended for a Houſe; How hainouſly " Flagitious then ſhall the God of Heaven account " it to ſet Fire on his complete Spiritual Houſe the " Church? —— doubtleſs, how ſlight ſoever the " World makes of theſe Spiritual Diſtempers, it ſhall " be eaſier in the Day of Judgment for Thieves, " and Whoremongers, and Adulterers, than for the " Breakers of Publick Peace. Never was any ſo " fearfull Vengeance inflicted on any Malefactors, as " on *Corah*, and his Combination. Surely, if we " conſider the Sin it ſelf, other Offences had been " far more heinous; but in that it was a preſumptuous

(*c*) Peace-maker.

" Mutiny

"Mutiny tending to the Affront of Allowed Autho-
"rity, to the Violation of Peace, and to the Deſtru-
"ction of Community, the Earth could not ſtand
"under it, Hell only was fit to receive it.

Nor was the Sin of *Corah* peculiar to the Days of *Moſes*, and the State of the Tabernacle in the Wil-
Ver. 11. derneſs; For St. *Jude* hath told us, that the Sin of *Corah* was committed in his Time, and I fear is now, and may be doubtleſs to the End of the World.

Would we know therefore what Schiſm is, we muſt remember, that a Church is made up of the People united to their Biſhop, who Preſides over them in Holy Things, who gives them the Sacraments, inſtructs them in the Ways of Holineſs, and Cenſures them if they do amiſs; (and therefore He is ſometimes called *the Church*, as St. *Matth.* 18. 17. *Tell the Church*, that is, the Governors of it.) To Him the People owe Obedience, as to their Spiritual Father, and from Him they ought not, without the greateſt Reaſon to Separate: For a Separation, without a juſt Cauſe, from our Biſhop, is *A Formal Schiſm*, (as much as if we Separated from the whole Catholick Church, with which our Biſhop Communicates, and of which He is one of the Overſeers left by Chriſt.) Thus ſays the Holy (*a*) *Ignatius*, "You being Children
"of the Light fly from all Schiſms; where
"your Shepherd is, there do you, as Sheep,
"follow him, for there are many Wolves.
"Be not deceived, my Brethren, If any
"Man be a Follower of a Schiſmatick, that

So ſays St. *Cypr. Ep.* 69. *Illi ſunt Eccleſia, Plebs Sacerdoti adunita, Et Paſtori ſuo Grex adhærens. i. e.* They are the Church, the People that are united to their Biſhop, (for ſo *Sacerdos* ſignifies in St. *Cyprian*, and the Writers of that Age) the Flock that ſtick to their Paſtor. Nor did thoſe good Men ever think the worſe of their Prelates, or imagine their Duty diſpenc'd with, when they were haraſt and perſecuted by the Secular Powers; but valued them the more, becauſe our Bleſſed Saviour had thought them worthy *not only to believe on Him, but alſo to Suffer for his ſake*: And if ever any one (of the Clergy or Laity) withdrew from his Duty, and tranſferr'd his Obedience from his Dioceſan, he was immediately Deprived, or Excommunicated; and few Men durſt brave the Thunder of the Churches Cenſures in thoſe Days.

(*a*) Ad *Philad.* p. 28. &c. ad *Smyrn.* p. 36. ad *Epheſ.* p. 36. & paſſim.

Man

"Man hath no Inheritance in the Kingdom of God; "for where there is Diviſion, and Wrath, in that "Place God doth not abide. Fly therefore Schiſm, "as the beginning of all Miſchief; He that is not "within the Sanctuary (*i. e.* within the Epiſcopal "Communion, as is plain by the Place) cannot "partake of the Bread of God. Let us therefore "ſtudiouſly decline Oppoſing the Biſhop, that we may "not be guilty of Rebelling againſt God. For it is "not Lawfull without the Biſhop (*i. e.* without his "leave) either to Baptize, or Celebrate the Holy "Euchariſt. —— Nor is it enough, (ſays St. (*a*) *Cy-* (*a*) Ep. Magn. & de Unit. Eccleſ.
"*prian*) that the Schiſmaticks agree with the Catho-"lick Church in Doctrinals, owning the ſame God "the Father, &c. this Excuſe will not help them; "For *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, did not recede "from the Religion profeſſed by *Moſes* and *Aaron*, "but worſhipped the ſame God of *Iſrael*, after the "ſame Manner, and with the ſame Rites: But be-"cauſe they tranſgreſſed the Rules and Limits of "their Miniſtry, therefore God cut them off, and "ordered their Cenſers to be made broad Plates for "the Altar, to deter others from the like Uſurpa-"tion; For how can he that doth not Conform to "the true Diſcipline of the Church pretend to be of "the true Faith? And thus ſay all the Fathers who treat of this Subject.

Now if this be the genuine Notion of Schiſm, it is eaſily applicable to the preſent Caſe of the depri-ved Biſhops, from whom a Separation ought not to be made, unleſs they be guilty of ſuch notorious Crimes either in Opinion, or Practice, as may juſtly Authorize ſuch a Separation. But

1. For

1. For their Opinions, I ſuppoſe no Man will ſay, that they have *made Shipwrack of the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints*, unleſs the owning the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and Catholick Antiquity

[*That Kings Derive their Authority from God, and are Accountable only to Him; That Oaths ought to be taken in the Senſe of the Impoſer, and in the plain meaning of the Words; And that no Power can diſpenſe with them but Gods, or the Perſon to whom they are given, and ſuch like Opinions*] be Hereſie.

2. For their Practiſes, I think I may ſay without Vanity, That, ſince the Apoſtles Days, the Church hath not had many Biſhops of greater Integrity, of truer Piety, and Contempt of the World, of more univerſal Learning, and greater Regard to the eternal Welfare of Mens Souls. Though the *Act* therefore has Deprived them, 'tis worth every good Prieſt's ſerious Conſideration, Whether that *Act* obligeth them to Deſert them, and to Diſown their Authority; ſince the Makers of the *Act* are Fallible, (which no Man denies, and did any one, that very *Act* were a Demonſtration they were ſo) and their Miſtake cannot Authorize my Neglect of a known Duty. Now it is conſiderable

1. That what *Agrippa* and *Feſtus* ſaid of St. *Paul* is truly applicable to them, *Theſe Men have done nothing worthy of Death, or of Bonds*, of Suſpenſion, or Deprivation; For all their Crime is their not Deſerting their Duty, and wilfully Breaking thoſe Oaths, whihc

Act. 26. 31.

which they are perſwaded in their Conſciences they cannot Diſpence with: Now a Man would think, that in an Age, wherein a free Toleration is given to all Diſſenters in Religion, purely that their tender Conſciences may not be grieved, the ſame Liberty ſhould be allowed to ſuch Eminent Confeſſors of the beſt Part of the Proteſtant Church. The *Prince of Orange* in his *Declaration* proteſts, *That he came over to cover the Nation from Perſecution for their Conſcience*, and he quotes the Ill-uſage of theſe very Non-ſwearing Biſhops, who a little before his Landing were put in the Tower for refuſing to publiſh the King's Declaration for Liberty of Conſcience, as one of the Grievances which he came to Redreſs; And yet thoſe very Men are now in worſe Circumſtances by this Act that they were then: Then they were only Impriſoned, and that but for a while; but now they are Deprived, and that both from the Benefice (for want of which they may, for ought the Makers of the Act know, ſtarve) and from the Office too, which to a good Biſhop is dearer than the Revenues of the whole World. Nay, in this very Caſe of refuſing the Oaths, the *Quakers* are diſpenc'd with. (And if it be argued, That they are obliged to an equivalent Proteſtation; it is well known that many, even of that Sect, refuſe both the Oath and the Proteſtation, and yet are not moleſted for that reaſon.) Now to refuſe all Oaths is unqueſtionably a greater Crime, than to refuſe one; Where then is the Juſtice? Either let all Offenders be left unpuniſhed, or none; but, it ſeems, contrary to the old Obſervation, this Law was made to let the Flies eſcape

Declar. p. 4.

Vid. Prince of *Orange*'s Declar. p. 3. Thus did they proceed with the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, and the other Biſhops, who having offered a moſt humble Petition to the King — were ſent to Priſon, and afterwards brought to a Tryal, *&c.*

through, and catch the Eagles, and Birds of the nobler Feather. But,

2. Were these Bishops as guilty as they are without reason presum'd to be, yet their Crime was not properly Cognizable where their Sentence was pronounced; for according to the Rules and Practice of the Church in all Ages, a Bishop ought to be Depriv'd or Depos'd by a Synod of Bishops, either General or Provincial; And was there any such Method of Proceeding in the Case of our Deprived Prelates? It being never heard of old, that Bishops were Deposed (or Deprived) by meer Lay-men: Hereticks, Schismaticks, and Disturbers of the publick Peace, if of the Clergy, were condemned by their Ecclesiastical Superiors; after which Sentence, it is true, the Secular Arm laid hold on them, and punished them either with Banishment, Confiscation of Goods, or some other such Mulct. And in the *Arian* Persecutions we read, that the Secular Authority often banished the Catholick Bishops, and seized their Revenues; but we never read, that their People ever thought them the less their Bishops for that, nor that they ceased to exercise that Episcopal Jurisdiction which Christ had intrusted them with; nay, on the contrary, we find, that whoever was superinduced into such a See, was looked on as an Intruder, and a Schismatical Disturber of the Churches Peace.

Thus when the Antient Bishops were condemn'd by packt and unlawful Synods (though conven'd by the Emperor's order) wherein there was no regard had to Justice or Truth, their Clergy stuck to them, as did the Presbyters and Deacons at *Alexandria*

to

to *Athanaſius* even in Baniſhment; nor would any Threats or Promiſes prevail with St. *Anthony*, and his Monks, to Communicate with any of his *Arian* Succeſſors, or of the Schiſmaticks of thoſe Days, as St. *Athanaſius* tells us in his Life. And when St. *Cyprian* fled from *Carthage*, we find an intimate and conſtant Communication between him and his Clergy, who did nothing in the weightier Affairs of Religion without conſulting him, they looking upon him (though at a great diſtance from them, and, as much as the *Roman* Government could do it, depriv'd of all his Power and Juriſdiction) as their Rightful Biſhop, without whoſe Advice they ought not to tranſact any thing belonging to the Government of the Church. And did not the Orthodox at *Conſtantinople*, when St. *John Chryſoſtom* was depoſed and baniſhed, ſtill retain their Obedience to him, and kept their Congregations apart, though his Succeſſor was Orthodox and Catholick? And what Regard was there not many Years paſt paid to the Biſhop of *London* by his Clergy, when he was under his Suſpenſion? And when the ſame Biſhop was conven'd before the High Commiſſion Court, did he not plead, "That he was a Biſhop of the Church of "*England*, and was to be try'd by his Metropolitan "and Suffragans, and therefore hoped he ſhould not "be denied the Right and Privilege of Chriſtian Bi-"ſhops? This (ſays my Author) the Chancellor "rub'd off with a Pretence, that the Parliament had "an Original Juriſdiction, (and, if I miſtake not, "the Plea is the ſame now;) the Biſhop's Council "alſo urged, That the Method of Proceeding accor-"ding to the Canons required, that a Citation ſhould

Vid Quadrien. Jacobi, p. 109, 110.

" precede Suſpenſion, and that to do otherwiſe was " contrary to the Law of God, of Nature, and of " all Nations in all Ages. Nay the Commiſſioners " themſelves would not declare the Biſhop ſuſpended " till (as their Sentence is worded) he had been " fully heard. And this is taken Notice of in the *Prince of Orange's Declaration, pag.* 2. as one of the Grievances that he came over to Redreſs, " That the " Commiſſioners ſuſpended the Biſhop of *London* only " becauſe he refuſed to obey an Order that was ſent " to him to ſuſpend a worthy Divine, without ſo " much as Citing him before him to make his own " Defence, or obſerving the common Forms of a " Proceſs.

But was this Method uſed in the preſent Caſe? Were the Biſhops or inferior Clergy ſummon'd before any Eccleſiaſtical Superior? or, Were they fully (or at all) heard, before they were ſuſpended? *If I have done Evil, bear witneſs of the Evil*, ſaid our bleſſed Saviour, *if not, why ſmiteſt thou me?*

Nay the very Schiſmatical Presbyters ſtood by their Pſeudo-Biſhops, as the *Novatians*, the *Meletians*, the *Luciferians*, (the traverſes of which laſt Sect are written at large by *Marcellinus* and *Fauſtinus* in their *Libellus Precum*, &c.) And what a Shame is it then to refuſe to pay a juſt Deference and Submiſſion to ſuch Apoſtolical Men, who are Venerable for their Holineſs, their Learning, and their Suffering for a good Cauſe.

But againſt this it may be Objected,

Object. 1.

Object. 1. That they are truly Deprived, though not according to the Formality of the Church-Canons. To which I Answer,

1. That this is the Matter in Dispute, By what Authority a Bishop can be Deprived? For what is *Coram non Judice*, is as it were never done, with respect to its validity.

2. Had the Sentence been Denounced by a legal Authority, yet if the Cause of the Sentence be not Just and Lawful, the Sentence is Invalid, as when a Man is wrongly Excommunicate.

3. Here is no Proof made of any Crimes, they are Guilty of, that may make them lyable to any Censures.

4. Were there such Proof, yet while it is only a matter of Conscience and Perswasion, it is Dissonant to the Promises of the Present Government, and their Procedure with other Dissenters in like Cases.

Object. 2. But the Non-swearing Bishops are but a small Number, a few unsatisfy'd Men.

Answ. 1. The Truth is never the less so, because it hath but a few Asserters.

2. What was the Number of the true Jewish Church under *Elijah*, or of the Christian under the Apostles just after the Crucifixion? Was not almost all the World *Arians* in the time of *Athanasius*, while he only, St. *Basil*, *Gregory Nazianzen*, *Hilary*, *Eusebius* of *Vercelles*, and a few other Bishops (a Number not much greater than our Non-swearing Bishops) were the only Asserters of the Orthodox Doctrine;

Doctrine; the whole World being Astonished to see it self turn'd *Arian*: And of what great Numbers could the Protestants boast before the Reformation?

Object. 3. But the Non-swearing Bishops are fond of their own Opinions, and will not yield, no not in such small Things as are now required from them.

Answ. But is Perjury a Peccadillo? And hath not God told us Solemnly, *That he will not hold him Guiltless that taketh his Name in vain?* Is it a little matter whether we shall Purge our Bibles, and Expunge the *Fifth Commandment*, and the *Thirteenth to the Romans* out of it? It is good Advice of the wise Man, *Give not the Water passage, no not a little:* For he who can be content to transgress in small Matters to Day, will to Morrow get Assurance to commit greater Crimes; For no Man is notoriously Wicked on a sudden; Evil Habits, as well as good, are gotten by time and practise.

Object. 4. But is it not an Argument of great stiffness of Temper, That the Bishops will not Communicate with their Brethren, who differ from them in this Point, but agree in all others?

Answ. Moses forbad the Children of *Israel* to Communicate with *Corah and his Company*, though they were exactly of the same Faith with the rest of the *Jewish* Congregation, only they differed about the Persons to whom the Government, Civil and Sacred, was to be committed.

committed. Beſides, The terms of Communion are now made Unlawful, as they believe; For it is no longer the Duty of a good Chriſtian to Communicate with the Church, when her terms of Communion prove Unlawful (this is our Argument againſt the Papiſts why we left them) though all good Chriſtians acknowledge it their Duty to Communicate with all Sound Parts of the Catholick Church in Prayers, and Sacraments; for we have made a Separation from the *Romiſh* Church, refuſing juſtly to frequent their places of Worſhip, becauſe their Service is made up of many Offices, in which we cannot conſcienciouſly joyn; ſuch as their Prayers to Saints, &c. and ſome acts are required (ſuch as Adoration of the Hoſt) which we judge to be Idolatrous; if therefore we juſtify our Separation from the *Romiſh* Church by this Principle, by parity of Reaſon we oblige our ſelves to ſeparate from any other Communion, where any Parts of the publick Service are againſt the expreſs Word of God; and if this Principle will not juſtify the preſent Separation, I fear, we ſhall be hard put to it to juſtify by it our former Separation from the *Romiſh* Church; for whatever Church enjoyns any Duty, or any part of a Duty (for what is Good muſt have all its Cauſes entire) contrary to the Law of God, makes the terms of her Communion Unlawful; But that Church that injoyns me to Curſe the Lord's Anointed, and to Pray that his Enemies may have Victory over him, &c. injoyns me what is contrary to the Law of God: For it matters not whether that Law be the Law of Faith, or the Law of Manners; though I ſhould think my ſelf more eſpecially Bound to obſerve the latter, for I may be more

more eaſily miſtaken in an Opinion, than in a plain Rule of Virtue; and a miſtake in Opinion is more Pardonable, becauſe Knowledge is harder to be attain'd in matters of Speculation, than in matters of Morality, and known Duty. And if it be Objected,

Object. 5. That Praying after the manner above mentioned, is not Impoſed as a term of Communion. I Anſwer,

Anſw. What have I to do to be preſent at any Service where I cannot joyn in all Parts of it? And is not ſaying *Amen* to every Prayer in our Liturgy required from all that are preſent at it; And is not the ſo ſaying a Teſtimony of Conſent? If not, I may ſerve God Daily or Weekly in a *Jewiſh Synagogue*, where they Curſe our Holy Saviour, or in an *Arian*, or *Socinian Conventicle*, where they deny his Divinity, becauſe I am not Bound to joyn in thoſe Execrable Expreſſions, which are not required as terms of Communion.

And if it be rejoyned that God knows my Heart; I Anſwer, How know the Congregation, but that, when I am upon my Knees, I ſay as heartily *Amen* to that Prayer, as any other; and I am Bound not to give Scandal to them, or to do any thing that may incourage them to Sin.

If it be ſaid, A Man may help himſelf out with his Intention, will this not Patronize all Evil? For by this Evaſion I can go to Maſs, be Preſent, and Kneel at the Elevation, and direct my Adoration to God in Heaven; Or (as the *Jeſuites* in the *Eaſt-Indies*

Indies advis'd their Converts) go into an Heathen Temple, bow down before the Idol, and direct the Worſhip to a Crucifix hid under the Coat; A Poſition thought fit to be Cenſur'd even by the late Pope himſelf. And how is this agreeable to that Sincerity, and Simplicity, which the Chriſtian Religion requires from us? I am ſure, the *Libellatici* were of old Cenſur'd, not for Sacrificing to Idols, nor for being preſent at the Sacrifices, but for purchaſing by Money a Certificate from the Governor (a leſs Offence than what we are Diſcourſing of) as if they had Sacrificed; ſuch a Demeanor being look'd on as Unbecoming the Sincerity of thoſe Times, and the Reſolution which the Goſpel requires. But,

Object. 6. Many help this out by ſaying, The World knows their Principles, and that they Proteſt againſt what others have done. But I Anſwer, This is as,

Anſw. 1. As if a Man ſhould Proteſt againſt Idolatry, and yet go every Day to Maſs; or againſt Blaſpheming the Name of our Holy Saviour, and yet Communicate all his Life long with the *Socinians*. And,

2. How can theſe Men avoid the Scandal, which is hereby given? Biſhops, and Prieſts, ought to be

Of this Mind was our venerable Martyr, Biſhop *Hooper*, as himſelf tells us in one of his Letters, publiſhed by Biſhop *Coverdale*, f. 158. about going to Maſs. "If it be true, that you know the thing "which ye reſort unto, to be the Diſhonour of God, Why do ye Honour it with your "Preſence? If you know it to be Evil, Why refrain you not from it? If your Conſcience "ſay, it is Idolatry, Why ſerveth your Body ſuch things, as your Faith abhor-"reth, *&c.*

Burning Lights, *i. e.* Illuſtrious in their Zeal for God, and Religion, and Exemplary in their Actions. Now as when an Eminent Clergy-man goes into a Popiſh Chapel, and bows down to an Image, a plain Man thinks he Worſhips the Wood, or the Stone, and knows not his Diſtinctions of *Mediate*, and *Immediate* Worſhip, of *Objective*, and *Terminative*, by which he would free himſelf from Idolatry; and by this means, ſeeing ſo great an Example, is tempted to break the *Second Commandment*: So is it here, the ſame plain Man comes into one of our Congregations, ſees a Non-ſwearer joyn in Prayers (at leaſt Kneel at them) How can he but hereby be Incourag'd to believe Rebellion no Sin; for how ſhould a plain Man know the Diſtinction of *de Jure*, and *de Facto*; of *Praying for a King in Poſſeſſion againſt one that ought to have it*; and ſuch like Diſtinctions? And for every ſuch Man's Soul is ſuch a Biſhop, or Prieſt to anſwer at God's Tribunal, if by following his Example he fall into any Sin. But,

Object. 7. If theſe Men be ſuch Sinners, that to joyn with them in their Devotions is Sin, Why do not the Non-ſwearing Biſhops Excommunicate them?

Anſw. 1. The High Prieſts had not Excommunicated the Worſhippers of *Baal* in *Elijah's* time; yet that would have been no Excuſe, if the 7000 that had not bow'd their Knees to that Idol, had gon into his Temple and Worſhip'd there. Nor did the *Sanhedrim* (that I know of) Excommunicate the *Sadducees*, or the Followers of *Judas Gaulonites* (who were

were all Traytors) yet, I ſuppoſe, it will not be deny'd, but that it was Unlawful to Communicate with them. I do not read, That the *Luciferians*, or the Followers of *Paulinus* at *Antioch*, were Excommunicated, and yet it was held to be Schiſmatical to frequent their Conventicles.

2. It hath been agreed, That it is neither Safe, nor Prudent to Excommunicate a Publick Community, when they deſerve it; though, perhaps, that Poſition ought very cautiouſly to be maintained, elſe the multitude of Offenders muſt at all times affright the Church from doing her Duty.

3. Put the Caſe, The Biſhops ought to have Excommunicated ſuch Offenders; Shall their Omiſſion of one Duty ingage them to commit another Sin? And it ſeems to me to be Superfluous to Excommunicate them; for all the Clergy ſo ingaged are already under Cenſures by the * Canons of our Church, *Anno* 1640, and by parity of Reaſon the Laity. But if all the Biſhops in the Church ſhould turn Apoſtates (I ſuppoſe that which I take for granted never will be) yet then it is the Duty of every Lay-man to ſtick to the Truth, and not to Communicate with a Schiſm (for they, who make the Schiſm, are the Schiſmaticks; and they, who make the Terms of Communion Unlawful, make the Schiſm) for it is better to be guilty of the neglect of thoſe Duties, that are neceſſary only *Neceſſitate Præcepti* (by Virtue of the Divine Command) ſuch as Communicating Publickly in Prayers, Receiving the Sacrament, *&c.* (though, I thank God, theſe Bleſſings are not wanted in Private) than

* Can. 1, 2.

to Deprive thoſe that are *Neceſſitate Medii* (as Means without which Salvation is not to be had) ſuch as our Duties to God, in keeping his Oath; and to our Sovereign, in Honouring and Obeying him, and in not reſiſting him for fear of Damnation. To all which it ſhould be added, That our Clergy are under the Obligation of an Oath, that binds them to obey their Ordinary in *Licitis & Honeſtis*: And it were worth their moſt ſerious Thoughts, what a dangerous Sin Perjury (either to a King, or a Biſhop) is in its own Nature; and how God has threatned, *Not to hold ſuch Men Guiltleſs who take his Name in vain.* And ſo much in Anſwer to the Objections.

3. Should this Method of Depriving Biſhops be allowed, how do ſuch Proceedings give Countenance to the Objection of our Adverſaries the Papiſts, who tell us, we have no Religion, but what is *Parliamentary*, and no Biſhops, but what are *Parliamentary*; For if this Procedure be according to the Rules, that our Holy Saviour hath left behind him, then they who have Deprived Seven, or Eight Biſhops, may Deprive all the reſt, and throw off the very Order: And, if ſo, may part with Chriſtianity, and Eſtabliſh any other Religion in the room of it. And in truth *Eraſtianiſm* eaſily diſſolves it ſelf into the Principles of Mr. *Hobs*, who allows the Government to make what Religion themſelves pleaſe, and to oblige the People to Conform to it. And have we not at preſent a ſad Example of it in the Church of *Scotland*, which is Depriv'd of that Epiſcopal Government, which Chriſt inſtituted in his Church? And was there not

as

as deplorable an Inſtance, not an Age ſince, in this Kingdom, when the *Long Parliament* firſt Aboliſhed Epiſcopacy, and then Murdered the King?

This I have ſaid, as a Divine, having meddled only with the Canons of the Church, not concerning my ſelf with what the Municipal Laws of late have ſaid in this Caſe. And, if this will not perſwade my Brethren of the Clergy to do their Duty to their Dioceſans (however Suſpended, or Deprived) I leave with them that Advice of St. *Cyprian* (who Excellently well underſtood this Controverſie) *Itaque qui Chriſto non credit Sacerdotem facienti, poſtea Credere incipit* (I would read it, *incipiet*) *Sacerdotem vindicanti:* That is, "He who will not believe "our Holy Saviour that hath Conſtituted Biſhops, "ſhall afterwards begin to belive him, when he "ſhall vindicate the thoſe Biſhops, whom he hath "appointed. Ep. 69. Florentio Pupiano.

FINIS.